TWO BUGLE CALLS

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TWO BUGLE CALLS.

O. W. NORTON.

The bugle was much used in the army. The carrying quality of its tones made it possible to convey commands to a great distance in times of quiet, and even in the roar of battle its shrill notes could be distinctly heard. The reveille which waked the soldier from his slumber in camp or bivouac and the order to put out the lights at night were sounded on the bugle. There were calls to breakfast, dinner and supper. Men in camp unfit for duty were summoned to the surgeon's tent by the sick call. The skirmish line in battle was ordered to deploy, to advance, to commence firing, to lie down, to cease firing, to retreat, to rally on the reserve, and to execute many other movements by various calls on the bugle. There were calls for sergeants to report to the adjutant, for officers to report to the colonel, for companies to form for roll-call, for regiments to form line of battle on the colors, to advance in line of battle and to retreat, to change direction in marching, to strike tents and prepare to march, and many others. No cavalryman will ever forget the stirring call of "Boots and Saddles."

When General McClellan was organizing the Army of the Potomac near Washington in the autumn of 1861, the camps along the line were very near together, and the constant drilling, to the sound of the bugle, of the various regiments and brigades often caused confusion in understanding orders. General Daniel Butterfield, who organized

a brigade at this time, known at first as "Butterfield's Brigade," saw at an early date the necessity of doing something to prevent this confusion. Butterfield had a genius for military matters, which later secured for him high rank in the Army of the Potomac and in the western armies. He could himself sound the bugle calls when occasion required. Shortly after he assumed command of the brigade, he composed, and taught the writer, then serving as his brigade bugler, a bugle call for his brigade. This consisted of three long notes on one key, and a catch repeated. It was sounded twice before each call for any operation or movement, and indicated to the officers and men that the call to follow was for the troops of this brigade. General Butterfield also prepared different calls for the regimental bugler of each regiment in his brigade. The men were accustomed to sing various words to the accompaniment of the bugle calls when they heard them. Most of these words were explanatory of the meaning of the call, or were jocose comments on the command. When the reveille was sounded men could be heard through the camps singing:

"I can't wake 'em up, I can't wake 'em up, I can't wake 'em up in the morning,
I can't wake 'em up, I can't wake 'em up, I can't wake 'em up at all.
The corporal's worse than the private, the sergeant's worse than the corporal,
The lieutenant's worse than the sergeant and the captain's worst of all.
I can't wake 'em up, I can't wake 'em up, I can't wake 'em up in the morning,
I can't wake 'em up, I can't wake 'em up, I can't wake 'em up at all."

These words exactly fitted the notes of the bugle. When the sick call sounded, the men sang, "All ye sick men, all ye sick men, get your calomel, get your calomel, get your calomel, get your calomel." Sometimes they sang, "Doctor Jones says, Doctor Jones says, come and get your quinine, quinine, quinine, come and get your quinine, qui-i-ni-i-ine."

When, on the march, the general halted his brigade intending to give the men an opportunity for a few moment's rest, the brigade call was sounded, then the call to halt, then a most welcome call of three short notes repeated, to which the great chorus responded along the line, "All lie down, all lie down." When the march was to be resumed the brigade call was again sounded, followed by the less welcome call, "Attention!" To this the men responded in words well suited to the music:

"Fall in, ye poor devils, as fast as ye can,
And when ye get tired I'll rest you again."

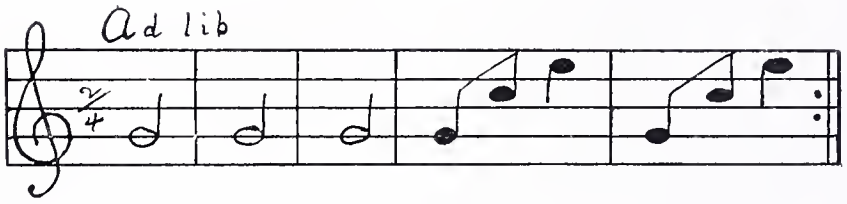
Words were set to many other calls, but one which lasted from Arlington Heights to Appomattox, was the interpretation of the brigade call. To this the men sang:

"Dan, Dan, Dan Butterfield, Butterfield,
Dan, Dan, Dan Butterfield, Butterfield."

The general used to say that sometimes in trying circumstances when the brigade was called up from a too short rest, he thought he could distinguish the words, "Damn, Damn, Damn Butterfield." This is not very probable. The men of that old brigade so much admired their gallant leader that nothing he could do would cause them to use such disrespectful language.

The general calls were used throughout the Union army. The music of the calls was printed in the Tactics where they could be studied and learned by officers whose duty it was to understand them and repeat in words to the men under their command the orders indicated by the bugle. This brigade call was used only by Butterfield's brigade and was not printed in the Tactics.

BUTTERFIELD'S BRIGADE CALL.



Dan, Dan, Dan, Butterfield, Butterfield,

This special call for an organization was useful in many ways. It had no small effect in arousing and maintaining an *esprit de corps* in this brigade, second to none in the army. It was known by all troops of the Army of the Potomac, and the brigade which marched to its music was always respected and welcomed by its comrades in arms as an organization to be trusted, and sure to give a good account of itself under all circumstances.

The rout of the Union army at the second battle of Bull Run was for a time much greater than that which occurred at the first battle, although the men having become veterans, order was more quickly restored. After making a gallant charge which was received by masked batteries and musketry in front, the line also being enfiladed by a large part of Longstreet's artillery, the men fell back in confusion. At the turnpike all trace of organization was lost. Darkness came on and the blockade at the Stone Bridge broke

up whatever semblance of order remained. Between the Stone Bridge and Centreville the turnpike was filled with a disorganized mass of infantry, artillery, ambulance and wagon trains. General Butterfield, riding in the midst of the *melee*, ordered his bugler to sound at short intervals his brigade call. It was received with shouts from all directions, and the men of this brigade, rallying to that call in the darkness, were formed into column, and marched into Centreville in better order than that prevailing in almost any other command.

In September, 1889, one of the regiments of this brigade met on Little Round Top, Gettysburg, to dedicate its regimental monument and to hold the annual reunion of the survivors of the regiment. Few of them had seen the battlefield since July, 1863. The writer, attending this reunion, took with him a bugle, and standing among the rocks and trees sounded once more the old Dan Butterfield Call. The men were scattered about over the hill and in the lower ground at its foot, some seeking the rocks where they fought, others going further to see how the position looked from the place where the enemy advanced. When the bugle sounded a great shout came up from the men, who recognized the old familiar call, although many of them had not heard it for a quarter of a century. They came charging up to the spot where the bugler stood, some with tears in their eyes, asking to have it repeated. That familiar sound echoing among the rocks where they had fought brought back, perhaps more vividly than words could do, the memories of the days when they had answered so often to its sound. Few men of the old Third Brigade can hear that call today without emotion.

One day in July, 1862, when the Army of the Potomac was in camp at Harrison's Landing on the James river, Virginia, resting and recruiting from its losses in the seven

days of battle before Richmond, General Butterfield summoned the writer, his brigade bugler, to his tent, and whistling some new tune asked the bugler to sound it for him. This was done, not quite to his satisfaction at first, but after repeated trials, changing the time of some of the notes which were scribbled on the back of an envelope, the call was finally arranged to suit the general. He then ordered that it should be substituted in his brigade for the regulation "Taps" (extinguish lights) which was printed in the Tactics and used by the whole army. This was done for the first time that night. The next day buglers from near-by brigades came over to the camp of Butterfield's brigade to ask the meaning of this new call. They liked it, and copying the music returned to their camps, but it was not until some time later, when generals of other commands had heard its melodious notes, that orders were issued, or permission given, to substitute it throughout the Army of the Potomac for the time-honored call which came down from West Point.

In the western armies the regulation call was in use until the autumn of 1863. At that time the Eleventh and Twelfth corps were detached from the Army of the Potomac and sent under command of General Hooker to reinforce the Union army at Chattanooga. Through its use in these corps it became known in the western armies and was adopted by them. From that time it became and remains to this day the official call for "Taps." It is printed in the present Tactics and is used throughout the United States Army and Navy, the National Guard and all organizations of veteran soldiers.

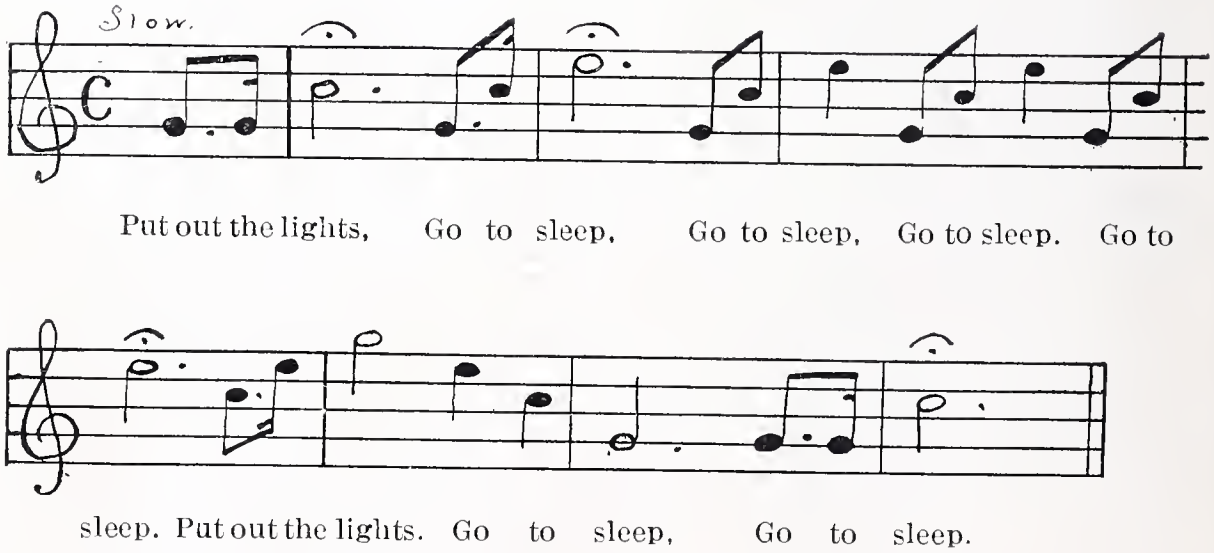
General Butterfield in speaking of the reason for changing the call for "Taps," said that the regulation call was not very musical and not appropriate to the order which it conveyed. He wanted a call which in its music should

have some suggestion of putting out the lights and lying down to rest in the silence of the camp, and musing over airs and musical phrases which might better represent this idea, he composed this call and directed its use in the camps of his brigade, the only troops over which he had at that time any authority. It made its way by its intrinsic beauty to a permanent place in the minds and hearts of the soldiers.

In accordance with the custom of attaching words to such calls as had a significance to which words were adapted, the men soon began to sing to this call, "Go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep. You may now go to sleep, go to sleep." This was the last regular call of the day or night in camp. About half an hour after the formation of a company for evening roll-call, to which it was summoned by the "Tattoo," this call was sounded as a signal to put out all lights in tents, stop all loud conversation, and everything which would interfere with the quiet rest and sleep of the men. Sometimes they sang, "Put out the lights, go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep. Put out the lights, go to sleep, go to sleep."

General Butterfield in composing this call and directing that it be used for "Taps" in his brigade, could not have foreseen its popularity and the use for another purpose into which it would grow. Today whenever a man is buried with military honors anywhere in the United States, the ceremony is concluded by firing three volleys of musketry over the grave, and sounding with the trumpet or bugle, "Put out the lights. Go to sleep." At the Soldiers' Homes, when the worn-out veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic lie down to their last rest, while their comrades stand about the grave with bared heads, some comrade bids farewell by sounding on the bugle this call to "Go to sleep."

At all posts of our little regular army, whether at garrisons or at the distant frontier camps, a soldier who is buried by his comrades receives this last salute. When General Butterfield was buried at West Point a few months ago, the solemn strains of this call bade the last farewell to its author. It consigned to their last rest Sheridan at Arlington, Sherman at St. Louis, Grant at New York and McKinley at Canton.

In addition to the use of this call by the army it is now used for the same purpose by the navy. In every port around the world visited by our vessels of war its sweet tones float over the water the last call of the night and it is the farewell to every Blue Jacket buried at sea.

There is something singularly beautiful and appropriate in the music of this wonderful call. Its strains are melancholy, yet full of rest and peace. Its echoes linger in the heart long after its tones have ceased to vibrate in the air. Like Handel's Largo, it is immortal.